Designation: ~~E620 – 11~~ E620 – 18

Standard Practice for Reporting Opinions of Scientific or Technical Experts[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E620; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers the scope of information to be contained in formal written technical reports which express the opinions of the scientific or technical expert with respect to the study of items that are or may reasonably be expected to be the subject of criminal or civil litigation.

1.2 If compliance with this ~~standard~~practice is claimed, the justifications for any deviations from this ~~standard~~practice must be documented.

1.3 *This standard may involve hazardous materials, operations, and equipment. This standard does not purport to address all of the safety ~~concerns~~ concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of ~~whoever uses~~ the user of this standard to ~~consult and~~ establish appropriate ~~safety~~ safety, health, and ~~health~~environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*[2]

E678 Practice for Evaluation of Scientific or Technical Data

E2655 Guide for Reporting Uncertainty of Test Results and Use of the Term Measurement Uncertainty in ASTM Test Methods

3. Significance and Use

3.1 This practice establishes those elements of the ~~expert's~~expert's opinion report which will make the report understandable to the intended recipient and focus on the technical aspects germane to the purpose for which the opinion is rendered.

4. Report ~~Content~~

4.1 All of the pertinent observations, calculations and testing results shall be reported accurately, clearly, unambiguously and objectively, and in accordance with any specific instructions in the method(s). The method(s) utilized shall be identified (including version and date when applicable) in such a manner as to allow critical review or replication by another party.

4.2 Interpretations, conclusions and opinions shall be clearly marked as such in the report (see 4.8).

4.3 The observations, test results, interpretations (if applicable), or conclusions (if applicable), shall be reported and shall include all information necessary for an opinion to be issued by a qualified individual.

4.4 Report authors may adopt one of the following means of meeting the requirements of 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3:

4.4.1 Preparation of a report that includes all of the available pertinent information listed in this practice; or

4.4.2 Preparation of an appendix to the report that includes any additional available pertinent information required by this practice not included in the body of the report; or

4.4.3 Preparation of supporting records relating to the specific investigation that contain all of the available pertinent information listed in this practice. The information shall be retained and be available.

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[1] This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E30 on Forensic Sciences and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E30.11 on Interdisciplinary Forensic Science Standards.

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[2] For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For Annual Book of ASTM Standards volume information, refer to the ~~standard's~~standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

4.5 Available and pertinent facts and data should be evaluated in accordance with Practice E678.

4.6 Preliminary information provided shall be clearly marked as such.

4.7 While this ~~standard~~practice does not specify report ~~format,~~ format (see 4.9, Formats), the following information shall be ~~included:~~included in the report unless the authoring organization or individual has a valid reason for not doing so, and states that reason in the report:

4.7.1 A title (for example, “Test Report” or “Report of Opinion”).

4.7.2 An~~Descriptive Information— identifier The following information shall be contained within the report, preferably in the introduction:~~that uniquely identifies the report:

4.7.2.1 This identifier shall be placed on each page of the report to ensure that each page is recognized as a part of the report.

4.7.3 ~~Identifying number and date the report was prepared,~~The organization, name and address of each person or organization, or both, requesting the work/report (that is, the customer).

4.7.4 The scope of the assignment addressed in the report (for example, “Drug Analysis,” “Fire Investigation,” “Incident Evaluation”).

4.7.5 ~~Name, address, and affiliation~~The organization, name, and address of each person who has rendered an opinion or conclusion contained in the ~~report,~~report.

4.7.6 ~~Name of the person or organization, or both, requesting the report,~~The organization, name(s), function(s), and signature(s) of the author including the date the report was signed.

4.7.7 A clear identification of the end of the report.

4.7.8 The name and address of the organization where the tests were performed.

4.7.8.1 If tests were performed outside of the authoring organization, the name, address, and date(s) the test(s) were performed, when necessary for interpretation of the findings, shall either be in the report or retained and available as supporting records according to 4.4.3.

4.7.9 The test results with, where appropriate, the units of measurement.

4.7.10 ~~Generic description~~ An unambiguous descriptive identification of the item(s) ~~examined together with specific data to uniquely identify the item(s) such as a serial number, marking, or some other means of adequately identifying the item(s) examined,~~sampled, examined, or tested.

4.7.10.1 Pertinent additional information, such as the condition of the item(s), the date received, identification markings such as a serial number, manufacturer name, model, or other type of designation, such as the unique case and sample number, etc., may be appropriate.

NOTE 1—Where the item to be examined is submitted by one party (for example, field technician) to a second party for examination or testing (for example., analytical laboratory), the receiving party shall employ an effective method to correlate the unique identifier of each item between the submitter and receiver.

4.7.11 ~~Date and location of examination,~~As applicable, identification of the sampling plan and methods used.

4.7.12 The ~~scope of~~ investigative activities performed in preparation for reaching ~~conclusions~~ interpretations, conclusions, and opinions.

4.7.13 All facts that are pertinent (that is, necessary for the interpretation of the test results) to the results or opinion rendered shall be reported in accordance with the classifications set forth below:

4.7.13.1 Identify those facts and data based on observations of the item(s) in question or photographs thereof.

4.7.13.2 Identify other facts and data relied upon in rendering an opinion.

4.7.13.3 Pertinent facts that may be critical to the validity or appropriate interpretation of the results may include:

(1) Date of sampling or sample collection.

(2) Details of environmental conditions during sampling or sample collection that might affect the interpretation of the results.

(3) Location of sampling, including any diagrams, sketches or photographs.

(4) Any standard or other specification for the sampling method or analytical procedure, and any deviations, additions to or exclusions therefrom.

(5) Date of receipt of the test item(s).

(6) Date(s) of performance of the tests or observations. For evaluations that require multiple or sequential steps include the start and end dates.

(7) Reference(s) to the sampling plan and procedures used by the laboratory or other bodies.

(8) Where relevant, a statement to the effect that the results relate only to the items examined.

4.7.14 In addition to the requirements identified in 4.7.1 through 4.7.13, where necessary for the interpretation of the results, the report shall include:

4.7.14.1 Statement(s) on deviations, additions, or exclusions from the test method, and information on the specific test conditions (such as environmental conditions).

4.7.14.2 Statement(s) of compliance or non-compliance with referenced requirements and specifications.

4.7.14.3 Statement(s) on the estimated uncertainty of measurement.